

Amendments to the Claims

1. (original) A process comprising:

- (a) manufacturing a shell from fibrous refractory material, wherein the shell includes an interior area and an opening;
- (b) inserting a fluxing material suitable for use in casting molten metal through the opening and into the interior area of the shell;
- (c) securing the fluxing material to the shell.

2. (original) The process of claim 1 and further comprising:

- (d) exposing the shell with the fluxing material therein to molten metal, wherein the fluxing material adjacent the opening is exposed to the molten metal.

3. (original) The process of claim 2 wherein (d) includes inserting the shell with the fluxing material therein into a casting mold containing molten metal.

4. (original) The process of claim 2 and prior to (d), further comprising the step of inserting the shell with the fluxing material therein into a casting mold.

5. (original) The process of claim 2 wherein (d) includes exposing only the fluxing material adjacent the opening to the molten metal.

6. (original) The process of claim 1 wherein the shell comprises a porous fibrous refractory material, and wherein step (a) includes manufacturing the shell from porous fibrous refractory material.

7. (currently amended) A The process of claim 1 wherein the shell comprises comprising:

(a) providing a shell comprising a ceramic fibrous refractory material, wherein the shell includes an interior area and an opening; and wherein step (a) includes manufacturing the shell from ceramic fibrous refractory material

(b) inserting a fluxing material suitable for use in casting molten metal through the opening and into the interior area of the shell;

(c) securing the fluxing material to the shell.

8. (original) The process of claim 1 wherein the shell comprises a heat insulating fibrous refractory material, and wherein step (a) includes manufacturing the shell from heat insulating fibrous refractory material.

9. (original) The process of claim 1 wherein step (c) includes integrally connecting the fluxing material to the shell.

10. (original) The process of claim 1 wherein step (c) includes fusing the fluxing material to the shell.

11. (original) The process of claim 10 wherein the shell comprises a porous fibrous refractory material, wherein step (b) includes inserting at least a portion of the fluxing material into pores of the shell, and wherein step (c) includes fusing fluxing material in the pores of the shell.

12. (original) The process of claim 1 and further comprising:

- (d) exposing the shell with the fluxing material therein to molten metal for at least a predetermined time period, wherein substantially all of the fluxing material is released from the shell to the molten metal during the predetermined time period.

13. (new) The process of claim 7 wherein the shell comprises a top end, wherein the top end comprises the opening, wherein step (a) includes pouring the fluxing material in liquid form downward through the opening.

14. (new) A process comprising:

- (a) inserting a fluxing material into the interior area of a shell, wherein the fluxing material is suitable for use in molten metal flux treatment, wherein the shell comprises a heat insulating fibrous refractory material, wherein the shell has a higher melting temperature than the fluxing material, wherein the shell comprises a single opening enabling passage therethrough to the interior area, and wherein the inserting includes pouring the fluxing material in liquid form through the opening;
- (b) subsequent to step (a), securing the fluxing material to the shell, wherein the opening enables passage therethrough to secured fluxing material, wherein the securing includes solidifying fluxing material in the interior area, and wherein solidified fluxing material is prevented from passing through the opening.

15. (new) The process of claim 14 wherein the opening has a diameter, wherein step (b) includes integrally connecting fluxing material to the shell, and wherein step (b) further includes providing a solidified fluxing material having a greater diameter than the diameter of the opening.

16. (new) The process of claim 14 wherein the interior area is tapered, wherein step (b) includes forming a tapered solidified fluxing material.

17. (new) The process of claim 14 and further comprising:

- (c) exposing the shell with the fluxing material therein to molten metal, wherein only the fluxing material adjacent the opening is exposed to the molten metal.

18. (new) The process of claim 14 and further comprising:

- (c) exposing the shell with the fluxing material therein to molten metal, wherein the fluxing material has a lower melting temperature than the molten metal, and wherein the shell has higher melting temperature than the molten metal.

19. (new) The process of claim 18 wherein step (c) includes exposing the shell with the fluxing material therein to molten metal for at least a predetermined time period, wherein substantially all of the fluxing material is released from the shell via the opening to the molten metal during the predetermined time period.

20. (new) The process of claim 14 wherein the shell comprises a top end, wherein the top end comprises the opening, wherein step (a) includes pouring the fluxing material in liquid form downward through the opening.